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THEOSOPHY

A MAGAZINE DEVOTED TO

THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT
THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY
THE STUDY OF OCCULT SCIENCE AND PHILOSOPHY
AND ARYAN LITERATURE

Vol. XXXVII, 1948-1949

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(c) The investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

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—H.P.B.

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A U M

Let the wise hold formative voice and emotion; let him hold them in the Self which is wisdom; let him hold this wisdom in the Self which is great; and this let him hold in the Self which is peace. —*Crest Jewel of Wisdom*

THEOSOPHY

Vol. XXXVII **November, 1948** **No. 1**

"IF WELL ASSISTED"

AT a crucial point in the history of the original Theosophical Society, not long after the passing of H. P. Blavatsky, Wm. Q. Judge handed on a message of counsel to those who worked with him—a message embodying the faith and conviction sustaining the work of Theosophy. The intent of the message was to show how devotion to Truth itself would enable the Society and its members to grow beyond the privative limits of personalities. The point at issue was support of a prominent member of the T.S. whose removal from office had been agitated for.

> He retains the position [the message began] for two reasons: *(a)* To pay a debt of gratitude, *(b)* The T.S. must not *seem* to the outside world to split or to become separate entities. It must remain *one undivided whole solid* from side to side. . . . He is capable of going on with his small portion of work to the end if well assisted. The work must not fail because here and there *personalities* fall and sin and are unwise. TRUTH remains and IT IS, whoever falls. . . .

History records that three years later the Society split into two sections, and after three more years a further split occurred, until finally the cohesion of the original T.S. was almost completely destroyed. The officer referred to retained his position "to the end"—which came fifteen years from the time, in 1892, of the first crisis. If "well assisted," and if the statement of his capability was not exaggerated, it is conceivable that the T.S. might have survived intact into the twentieth century, for "he" was its President-Founder, Col. H. S. Olcott, who lived until 1907.

What manner of assistance would have preserved the Society as "*one undivided whole,*" despite the tangential deviations of this or that personality? Could the clash of individual "wills" have been availed of as training in the practice of universality? Could differences of opinion have been taken as instruction in unifying principles? Could conflicting means and methods of work have been assimilated to an aim and purpose transcending all mechanical or organizational details?

The theosophical movement is intended to reverse the unnatural order which places results above efforts and means above ends. The theosophist is expected to set about overcoming the prevalent error of attending to the *weaknesses* of others: theosophical philosophy is a guide to the *moral* man, and the power he may exert over his own nature and circumstances. The encouragement and assistance toward "self-improvement, intellectual, moral and spiritual"—which, H. P. Blavatsky wrote, is the duty of the theosophist toward his fellow students—exercises the higher mind as much as does the study of abstract ideas. The practical metaphysics of upholding the best and most creative aspects of co-workers is a discipline of the personal nature quite as strict, if not stricter, than the discipline imposed upon *kama-manas* by attention to theosophical doctrines.

The theosophist, seeking out the *common strengths* of all men, runs counter to human nature, and centers his aim on the potential divinity of the human being. In Robert Crosbie's words, "It is by dwelling on our inherent perfectibility that we get rid of our imperfections. The last thing to doubt is the inherent perfectibility of all men." Mr. Judge's statement, made in connection with the message already quoted from, puts the matter in terms of heart qualities:

> Only the feeling of true brotherhood, of true love for humanity, aroused in the soul of some one strong enough to stem this tide, can carry us through. For LOVE and TRUST are the only weapons that can overcome the REAL enemies against which the true theosophist must fight. If I or you go into this battle from pride, from self-will, from desire to hold our position in the face of the world, from anything but the purest motives, we will fail.

What, after all, would have been accomplished if the T.S. had been maintained over the years in its original integrity? Why should the *appearance* of solidity be important?

It is, of course, extremely doubtful that H.P.B., W.Q.J., or the Teachers they represented, considered the *appearance* of unity and fraternity a final goal of achievement for theosophists. But the appearance of brotherhood may be a valid accomplishment if it be recognized that not even an outward impression could be conveyed without real effort toward *a brotherhood in fact.* Perhaps, in a world of appearances, brotherhood itself can only *seem* to be, whatever its reality on inner planes of being.

The teachers of Theosophy called to notice, in many ways, that theosophical "victories," results, and successes are not those of worldly position or repute, but always belong to the inner realm of motivation, devotion, and sincere endeavor. Those engaged in theosophical efforts may not be eminently fit—and yet if they consistently try to be the better able to serve the theosophical needs of others, their work will be increasingly vital, practical, compelling and enlightening. The methods of application may not be perfectly efficient—and yet if they are continually being checked, in all honesty, with the "lines laid down," it is certain that much *theosophic* work will be steadily accomplished. The students of Theosophy may not be remarkably clear thinkers or strikingly brilliant metaphysicians—but their dissemination of theosophical doctrine will be wide and deep if their aim is for the ethics of Theosophy to "reach into and take hold of the real man."

The theosophical movement, in the life of its volunteers, is their *movement toward* Theosophy, and is real, powerful, and sustaining for all those whose devotion to their fellowmen is of the same quality. "If well assisted" by individual thought, will and feeling, the Movement will be the means of developing in its workers the requisite power for furthering human solidarity in "appearance"—and in reality.

CONVERSATIONS ON OCCULTISM

I: The Kali Yuga—The Present Age

STUDENT.—I am very much puzzled about the present age. Some theosophists seem to abhor it as if wishing to be taken away from it altogether, inveighing against modern inventions such as the telegraph, railways, machinery, and the like, and bewailing the disappearance of former civilizations. Others take a different view, insisting that this is a better time than any other, and hailing modern methods as the best. Tell me, please, which of these is right, or, if both are wrong, what ought we to know about the age we live in?

Sage.—The teachers of Truth know all about this age. But they do not mistake the present century for the whole cycle. The older times of European history, for example, when might was right and when darkness prevailed over Western nations, was as much a part of this age, from the standpoint of the Masters, as is the present hour, for the Yuga—to use a Sanskrit word—in which we are now had begun many thousands of years before. And during that period of European darkness, although this Yuga had already begun, there was much light, learning, and civilization in India and China. The meaning of the words "present age" must therefore be extended over a far greater period than is at present assigned. In fact, modern science has reached no definite conclusion yet as to what should properly be called "an age," and the truth of the Eastern doctrine is denied. Hence we find writers speaking of the "Golden Age," the "Iron Age," and so on, whereas they are only parts of the real age that began so far back that modern archæologists deny it altogether.

Student.—What is the Sanskrit name for this age, and what is its meaning?

Sage.—The Sanskrit is "Kali," which added to Yuga gives us "Kali-Yuga." The meaning of it is "Dark Age." Its approach was known to the ancients, its characteristics are described in the Indian poem "The Mahabharata." As I said that it takes in an immense

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Note.—This article, the first of a series, was originally printed by Wm. Q. Judge in *The Path* for April, 1888.—Eds. Theosophy.

period of the glorious part of Indian history, there is no chance for anyone to be jealous and to say that we are comparing the present hour with that wonderful division of Indian development.

Student.—What are the characteristics to which you refer, by which *Kali-Yuga* may be known?

Sage.—As its name implies, darkness is the chief. This of course is not deducible by comparing to-day with 800 A.D., for this would be no comparison at all. The present century is certainly ahead of the middle ages, but as compared with the preceding Yuga it is dark. To the Occultist, material advancement is not of the quality of light, and he finds no proof of progress in merely mechanical contrivances that give comfort to a few of the human family while the many are in misery. For the darkness he would have to point but to one nation, even the great American Republic. Here he sees a mere extension of the habits and life of the Europe from which it sprang; here a great experiment with entirely new conditions and material was tried; here for many years very little poverty was known; but here to-day there is as much grinding poverty as anywhere, and as large a criminal class with corresponding prisons as in Europe, and more than in India. Again, the great thirst for riches and material betterment, while spiritual life is to a great extent ignored, is regarded by us as darkness. The great conflict already begun between the wealthy classes and the poorer is a sign of darkness. Were spiritual light prevalent, the rich and the poor would still be with us, for Karma cannot be blotted out, but the poor would know how to accept their lot and the rich how to improve the poor; now, on the contrary, the rich wonder why the poor do not go to the poorhouse, meanwhile seeking in the laws for cures for strikes and socialism, and the poor continually growl at fate and their supposed oppressors. All this is of the quality of spiritual darkness.

Student.—Is it wise to inquire as to the periods when the cycle changes, and to speculate on the great astronomical or other changes that herald a turn?

Sage.—It is not. There is an old saying that the gods are jealous about these things, not wishing mortals to know them. We may analyze the age, but it is better not to attempt to fix the hour of a

change of cycle. Besides that, you will be unable to settle it, because a cycle does not begin on a day or year clear of any other cycle; they interblend, so that, although the wheel of one period is still turning, the initial point of another has already arrived.

Student.—Are these some of the reasons why Mr. Sinnett was not given certain definite periods of years about which he asked?

Sage.—Yes.

Student.—Has the age in which one lives any effect on the student; and what is it?

Sage.—It has effect on every one, but the student after passing along in his development feels the effect more than the ordinary man. Were it otherwise, the sincere and aspiring students all over the world would advance at once to those heights towards which they strive. It takes a very strong soul to hold back the age's heavy hand, and it is all the more difficult because that influence, being a part of the student's larger life, is not so well understood by him. It operates in the same way as a structural defect in a vessel. All the inner as well as the outer fibre of the man is the result of the long centuries of earthly lives lived here by his ancestors. These sow seeds of thought and physical tendencies in a way that you cannot comprehend. All these tendencies affect him. Many powers once possessed are hidden so deep as to be unseen, and he struggles against obstacles constructed ages ago. Further yet are the peculiar alterations brought about in the astral world. It, being at once a photographic plate, so to say, and also a reflector, has become the keeper of the mistakes of ages past which it continually reflects upon us from a plane to which most of us are strangers. In that sense therefore, free as we suppose ourselves, we are walking about completely hypnotized by the past, acting blindly under the suggestions thus cast upon us.

Student.—Was that why Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, *for they know not what they do?*"

Sage.—That was one meaning. In one aspect they acted blindly, impelled by the age, thinking they were right.

Regarding these astral alterations, you will remember how in the time of Julian the seers reported that they could see the gods, but they were decaying, some headless, others flaccid, others minus

limbs, and all appearing weak. The reverence for these ideals was departing, and their astral pictures had already begun to fade.

Student.—What mitigation is there about this age? Is there nothing at all to relieve the picture?

Sage.—There is one thing peculiar to the present *Kali-Yuga* that may be used by the Student. All causes now bring about their effects much more rapidly than in any other or better age. A sincere lover of the race can accomplish more in three incarnations under Kali-Yuga's reign than he could in a much greater number in any other age. Thus by bearing all the manifold troubles of this Age and steadily triumphing, the object of his efforts will be more quickly realized, for, while the obstacles seem great, the powers to be invoked can be reached more quickly.

Student.—Even if this is, spiritually considered, a Dark Age, is it not in part redeemed by the increasing triumphs of mind over matter, and by the effects of science in mitigating human ills, such as the causes of disease, disease itself, cruelty, intolerance, bad laws, etc.?

Sage.—Yes, these are mitigations of the darkness in just the same way that a lamp gives some light at night but does not restore daylight. In this age there are great triumphs of science, but they are nearly all directed to *effects* and do not take away the *causes* of the evils. Great strides have been made in the arts and in cure of diseases, but in the future, as the flower of our civilization unfolds, new diseases will arise and more strange disorders will be known, springing from causes that lie deep in the minds of men and which can only be eradicated by spiritual living.

Student.—Admitting all you say, are not we, as Theosophists, to welcome every discovery of truth in any field, especially such truth as lessens suffering or enlarges the moral sense?

Sage.—That is our duty. All truths discovered must be parts of the one Absolute Truth, and so much added to the sum of our outer knowledge. There will always be a large number of men who seek for these parts of truth, and others who try to alleviate present human misery.

They each do a great and appointed work that no true Theosophist should ignore. And it is also the duty of the latter to make

similar efforts when possible, for Theosophy is a dead thing if it is not turned into the life. At the same time, no one of us may be the judge of just how much or how little our brother is doing in that direction. If he does all that he can and knows how to do, he does his whole present duty.

Student.—I fear that a hostile attitude by Occult teachers towards the learning and philanthropy of the time may arouse prejudice against Theosophy and Occultism, and needlessly impede the spread of Truth. May it not be so?

Sage.—The real Occult Teachers have no hostile attitude toward these things. If some persons, who like theosophy and try to spread it, take such a position, they do not thereby alter the one assumed by the real Teachers who work with all classes of men and use every possible instrument for good. But at the same time we have found that an excess of the technical and special knowledge of the day very often acts to prevent men from apprehending the truth.

Student.—Are there any causes, other than the spread of Theosophy, which may operate to reverse the present drift towards materialism?

Sage.—The spread of the knowledge of the laws of Karma and Reincarnation and of a belief in the absolute spiritual unity of all beings will alone prevent this drift. The cycle must, however, run its course, and until that is ended all beneficial causes will of necessity act slowly and not to the extent they would in a brighter age. As each student *lives* a better life and by his example imprints upon the astral light the picture of a higher aspiration acted in the world, he *thus aids souls of advanced development to descend from other spheres* where the cycles are so dark that they can no longer stay there.

Student.—Accept my thanks for your instruction.

Sage.—May you reach the terrace of enlightenment.

The triumphs of truth are the most glorious, chiefly because they are the most bloodless of victories, deriving their highest lustre from the number of the *saved,* not of the *slain.*—SPENCER

MIND OF THE AGE

VII: Concentration-Camp Psychology

FOR those who seek to understand the psychological illness of our time, the Nazi death camps of World War II may prove to have been object lessons nearly as valuable as they were costly. These "camps" represented the acute stage of a universal disease called Institutionalism. In Buchenwald and Dachau, for instance, a plan for the systematized dehumanization of human personality was conceived and executed with considerable "scientific" acumen. After prolonged incarceration, even the *death* of an individual seemed less and less important to his friends and family —finally, to himself. His identification was gone. He was already as if dead, to family and acquaintances. He was not even charged with any particular crime, nor was he serving any specified sentence. For him, the world, as it is commonly known, had ceased to exist. Only The Process of the camp remained. In the vast majority of instances, the moral person was successfully killed before the death of the body.

In a comprehensive article, "The Concentration Camps" (in the June *Partisan Review*), Hannah Arendt centers her discussion around one point, that "the psyche (or character) *can* be destroyed even without the destruction of the physical man." Tersely and effectively, she sums up the technique designed for the destruction of moral consciousness:

> When a man is faced with the alternative of betraying and thus murdering his friends or of sending his wife and children, for whom he is in every sense responsible, to their death; when even suicide would mean the immediate murder of his own family—how is he to decide? The alternative is no longer between good and evil, but between murder and murder. In perhaps the only article which really gets to the core of this matter, Camus (in *Twice a Year,* 1947) tells of a woman in Greece, who was allowed by the Nazis to choose which among her three children should be killed.
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> Through the creation of conditions under which conscience ceases to be adequate and to do good becomes utterly impossible, the consciously organized complicity of all men in the crimes of totalitarian regimes is extended to the victims and thus made

> really total. The SS implicated concentration camp inmates—criminals, politicals, Jews—in their crimes by making them responsible for a large part of the administration, thus confronting them with the hopeless dilemma whether to send their friends to their death, or to help murder other men who happened to be strangers.

The aim of the concentration camps, Miss Arendt shows, was to destroy the civil rights of the whole German population, to render the total citizenry incapable of individuality in any form. "Even free consent is an obstacle," for spontaneity of any kind proclaims the presence of a distinct person whose acts and responses cannot be *exactly the same* as everyone else's and who is therefore a disturbing factor in the regimented society. But we of the "democracies" expect a great deal of conformity also, especially when involved in a war or when afraid of being so involved. In wartime the use of individual moral discrimination is more or less dishonored under democratic as well as under authoritarian systems of government, and few are the active champions of this prerogative of ethical freedom. The death-camp psychology is only the last mile on the road of materialism, a thoroughfare with which every nation is familiar. The ideology of the death camp is an attempt to repeal the power of choice in the human ego, in the interests of efficiency.

What once seemed to be a technical debate about the reality of mind versus matter is now revealed to have been essentially a denial of the individual man's value. Miss Arendt writes that in a totalitarian system, "Character is a threat and even the most unjust legal rules are an obstacle; but individuality, anything indeed that distinguishes one man from another, is intolerable." Totalitarianism does not strive simply toward despotic rule over men, but "toward a system in which men are superfluous." To realize that the social consequence of materialism is institutionalism will make clear the way in which American bureaucracy in both business and government, national militarization programs, and national propaganda are related to the horrors of Buchenwald and Dachau. Unless the premises of Institutionalism are denied in practice, unless the individual citizen is continually granted *more* "inalienable rights" and more areas of responsibility in government, *any* system is tending toward the death-camp goal: total disenfranchisement of man. The acme of Institutionalism is graphically described by

David Rousset in his seven-hundred-page recollection of concentration camp experience entitled *Les Jours de notre mort* (literally, "the days of our death"):

> The triumph of the SS demands that the tortured victim allow himself to be led to the noose without protesting, that he renounce and abandon himself to the point of ceasing to affirm his identity. And it is not for nothing. It is not gratuitously, out of sheer sadism, that the SS men desire this defeat. They know that the system which succeeds in destroying its victim before he mounts the scaffold . . . is incomparably the best for keeping a whole people in slavery. In submission. Nothing is more terrible than these processions of human beings going like dummies to their death. The man who sees this says to himself: "For them to be thus reduced, what power must be concealed in the hands of the masters," and he turns away, full of bitterness but defeated.

The death camps aimed at perfecting an idiot- or robot-producing machine, and must have succeeded in the "extreme cases" (which were the rule instead of the exception) in so crippling the bodily instrument that the inner character could hardly communicate intelligibly. As Miss Arendt observes: "Actually the experience of the concentration camps does show that human beings can be transformed into specimens of the human beast, and that man's 'nature' is only 'human' in so far as it opens up to man the possibility of becoming something highly unnatural, that is, a man."

Eugen Kogon, another survivor whose book Miss Arendt refers to as the product of "assimilated recollection," has offered the thesis that "most of the prisoners [left] the concentration camps with exactly the same convictions that they had before; if anything, these convictions became more accentuated." This is striking evidence of the fact that it is extremely easy to encourage large portions of humanity to "reinvolute into the animal kingdom"—the alternative to moral growth. Man cannot stand still *and remain human.* The camps, as Miss Arendt points out, are a demonstration that "the power of man is so great that he really can be what he wishes to be" —even if he wants to be less than man. The "drill grounds" for SS men, in Kogon's phrase, were also a fantastic experiment in cultivating inhumanity *in the administrators themselves.*

The cruelest situation must have some reason for being and for afflicting certain persons and not others; for one thing, the on-

looker is always involved, and must choose between indifference and degrees of purposeful action. From Miss Arendt's conclusion it is evident that the indifference of the "outside world" to the fate of concentration camp victims would be only another Nazi victory. She writes:

> Today, with population almost everywhere on the increase, masses of people are continuously being rendered superfluous by political, social, and economic events. At such a time the instruments devised for making human beings superfluous are bound to offer a great temptation: why not use these same instruments to liquidate human beings who have already become superfluous?
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> This side of the matter is only too well understood by the common sense of the mob which in most countries is too desperate to retain much fear of death. The Nazis, who were well aware that their defeat would not solve the problems of Europe, knew exactly what they were doing when, toward the end of the war—which by then they knew they had lost—they set up those factories of annihilation which demonstrated the swiftest possible solution to the problem of superfluous human masses. There is no doubt that this solution will from now on occur to millions of people whenever it seems impossible to alleviate political, or social, or economic misery in a manner worthy of man.

One difficulty in arousing the popular *conscience* with respect to the death camps is the fact that most people seem to find the very existence of the Nazi crimes unbelievable. Even when faced by the most exact corroborating testimony, complete with photographs and statistical records kept by the Nazis, the mind seldom accedes to the reality. Yet the process of deliberately destroying the personality of "political enemies" continues in Russia today in only slightly attenuated form. And now, for the citizens of the democracies, comes the vital question. Were eighty million German people completely different from ourselves? Was their culture, one filled with the contributions of fully as many humanitarian philosophers and artists as our own, of an entirely different bent? Are two hundred million Russians utterly dissimilar to ourselves? True, they are governed by a system which practices many horrors, and they support that system either by acquiescence or by positive zeal. But unless "citizens of the democracies" are themselves hopelessly institutionalized, they may answer truthfully that neither the German nor the

Russian people are fundamentally different from ourselves, nor are their institutions based upon an entirely "foreign" psychology.

The programs of totalitarianism in Germany, Russia and Japan began with militarization. At present the process of militarization is still proceeding in the United States. Once grant the inescapable premise that men in the mass in all countries are much the same, and there is no dodging the conclusion that the degree of militarism already attained in England and America makes us to some degree like "those others." How fantastic and remote this sounds! Yet there is no flaw in the logic. The outcome of the argument appears fantastic and unreal only for the reason that in no modern western nation are men aware of the world-wide encroachment of institutional values upon the life of the human soul. The institutionalisms of England and America have not produced concentration camps, nor will they necessarily do so, but they have produced millions of minds already prone to think in "concentration-camp" terms, and to be blinded to all values apart from those of commercial, religious and political propaganda.

Few Americans saw anything of the "totalitarian" psychology in the dropping of the atom bomb on Hiroshima or in the subsequent Bikini tests. But there is a strong connectedness of motivation and attitude. Both death camps and atom bombs are distinct repudiations or twistings of the moral sense. The real destruction is not by atom bombs, any more than the real obliteration of the German death camp inmate was accomplished in the gas chamber. Final destruction is death of the soul. If the moral man dies, there ends also that area of interdependence in aspiration uniting all who share a common humanity.

The True Harvest

The greatest gains and values are farthest from being appreciated. We easily come to doubt if they exist. We soon forget them. They are the highest reality. Perhaps the facts most astounding and most real are never communicated by man to man. The true harvest of my daily life is somewhat as intangible and indescribable as the tints of morning or evening. —Thoreau

THE DIVISION OF NATURE

by JOHN SCOTUS ERIGENA

II

ASTRONOMY. [Erigena believes the earth to be the centre of the universe, of course, but thinks that the four planets, Mercury, Venus, Mars and Jupiter, circle round the sun, which is midway between the earth and the sphere of the fixed stars.]* The distances between the heavenly bodies are all of a regular arithmetical proportion, and this fits in with the doctrine of the harmony of the spheres. The unit of distance is the earth's diameter, and this space is the equivalent of one tone. There is a space equal to one terrestrial diameter between the surface of the earth and the centre of the moon; another from the centre of the moon to the orbit of the planets; another from the orbit of the planets to the centre of the sun; another from the centre of the sun to the further side of the planetary orbit; another from there to Saturn (which does not, like the rest of the planets, circle round the sun, but directly round the earth); another from Saturn to the sphere of the fixed stars. These six spaces, with the diameter of the earth itself for the seventh, give the tones of the octave. The radii of the lunar orbit, of the solar orbit, and of the orbit of the sphere of the fixed stars, are thus three times, seven times, and thirteen times the length of the radius of the circumference of the earth.†

The Trinity in Nature and Man. The trinity of *essentia* [existence], *virtus* [power], *operatio* [action], is found in all substances, whether possessed of bodies or not. It is one thing to be, another to be able to act, and another to act. A tree exists, and can grow, and does grow. A man is, and has the power to understand, and does understand. Every creature, visible and invisible, has within it this triad of existence, potentiality, and action. And these three are one.

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*This sentence is by Henry Bett, from whose book, *Johannes Scotus Erigena,* this rendition of the Scot's philosophy is derived.

†"It has been pointed out," writes Bett, "that this is decidedly the most advanced astronomical scheme of the Middle Ages, and that, except for the exemption of Saturn, it is the system of Tycho Brahe." Brahe (1546—1601), a Danish astronomer, was a pioneer in the science, and his work was continued by Kepler.

The soul of man has a triune character, distinguished as *nous* [mind, from "to perceive"], *logos* [the word or form which expresses a thought; also, the thought, from "to speak"] and *dianoia* [the discursive faculty, from "to revolve in the mind"]. The five senses are like the five gates of a city, and what they admit, exterior sense introduces to interior sense. Exterior sense is simplex in its nature, and is seated in the heart. It does not belong to the essence of the soul, but rather to a conjunction of soul and body. Exterior sense may be deceived, as with a flame and the reflection of it. It is for interior sense to judge of these external impressions.

There are three universal motions of the human spirit—the first is of the soul, the second of reason, the third of sense. The first is a motion around God, and defies definition, for God Himself cannot be defined. The second motion knows God as the cause of all created things. The third motion knows things in their multiplicity and individuality as visible appearances, as *phantasiae.* In other words, what sense knows as separate and multiple in its *operatio,* in actual effects; reason knows as one and simplex in its *virtus,* in the primal causes; and intellect knows ineffably in its *essentia,* in God.

It is natural that the triune nature of God should be reflected generally in the creation and specially in man, for man is not merely the climax of creation,—he is both the epitome of creation and the medium of creation. Man is the microcosm in the strictest sense of the word. He is the summary of all existence. There is no creature that is not recapitulated in man. There is nothing in the universe lower than body or higher than soul, as Augustine said: Between God and the mind of man, there is no creature interposed.

Soul and body were created together, and the soul therefore precedes the body only in dignity, not in space or in time. But the body as we know it, material and corruptible, came into existence after man's sin, and because of it. It was man, after he had transgressed, who made to himself this fragile and mortal body. This is signified by the fig-leaves, which are a shade, excluding the rays of the sun, as our bodies shade our souls in the darkness of ignorance, and exclude the light of truth. But where, then, is that spiritual and incorruptible body which belonged to man before

his sin? It is hidden in the secret recesses of our nature, and it will reappear in the future, when this mortal shall put on immortality.

All the four species of created life,—intellectual, as in angels; rational, as in men; sensible, as in animals; and senseless, as in plants,—are contained in man, because he contains every creature within himself. He knows as an angel, reasons as a man, feels as an animal, lives as a plant.

The Creation of Man is narrated twice, first as in the image of God, and second as in the genus of animals. In the first place it is written: *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness* (Gen. i. 26), and there is no mention of *the dust,* or of *a living soul.* In the second place it is written: *And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul* (Gen. ii. 7), where the same phrase is used as was previously used of the beasts. The animal man is often spoken of in Scripture as *the flesh,* and the spiritual man as *mind, soul,* or *intellect.* It is because of the duplex nature of man that we have the narrative of a twofold creation.

The whole nature of man is made in the image of God, for the soul derives directly from God, without the interposition of any other creature, and the vital motion derives from the soul, and the body derives from the vital motion. The vital motion is nothing but a certain conjunction and connection of soul and body, mutually depending upon each other, whereby the body is formed from the soul, for when the body and soul are separated, the vital motion ceases.

Human nature is sixfold; it exists, and lives, and feels through the body, and feels apart from the body, and reasons, and knows.

Man is a thought eternally created in the mind of God.

The notion of things, as created in the human mind, is the actual substance of the things, as the notion of the universe in the mind of God is the incommunicable substance of the universe. Things exist more truly, that is to say, in the notions of man than they exist in themselves. Sensible things are made for the sake of sense, not sense for the sake of sensible things.

If man had remained in Paradise, that is, if human nature had retained its integrity, it would not have suffered the severance into sexes, in the likeness of irrational animals, but man would have multiplied in an angelic fashion.

The Cause of Evil, in so far as it may be said to have a cause, is the irrational motion of the free will, and this cannot be properly referred to the free will, for the irrational motion is not properly relative to the free will, but contrary to it. It is an abuse of good: it is a good used evilly.

There is nothing vicious in any rational creature which is not good in some irrational creature. Ferocity is good in a lion, and filth in a pig, for these things are natural to these animals, but in angels and in men, they are vices. No creature is evil, nor is the knowledge of any creature evil. It is the perverse motion of the rational soul, which leaves the Creator, and turns itself to the lustful love of material things, which is evil. No nature is evil in itself. The nature of the demons is not evil, for as to their essence, they participate in goodness, or they could not exist at all.

Bene esse [the essence of goodness] is the *donum* [gift] of God. It is effected by the free will of the creature and what the Scriptures call Grace. This *bene esse* is not universally given, but only to angels and men; to intellectual and rational natures; and not universally to these, but only to the angels who kept their first estate and to men who are elect.

Nature brings the non-existent into existence. Grace brings some of the existent, beyond all existence, into union with God.

Retribution. The future punishment of the wicked is spiritual. The fire, the worm, the gnashing of teeth, the lake of brimstone, are not to be understood as corporeal and local. Where is Judas tormented, but in his polluted conscience, who betrayed his Lord? What punishment does he suffer but his belated and useless repentance, which burns like a flame forever? What does Dives suffer in hell, but the privation of those splendid banquets which he enjoyed in this life. What flame consumes the wicked king Herod, but his own fury, which murdered the innocents?

The evil will—the irrational motion of it—is punished in beings whose nature is good, rational, and impassible [impassive].

And as the evil will does not contaminate the natural good, so the torment of the evil will does not torment the natural subject to which it is attached and in which it is contained. So, what is itself incapable of punishment sustains by its virtue, and allows to be punished, that which is punished.

It is not mass or space which separates Paradise and the world, but diversity of intercourse and difference of beatitude.

The Last Judgment takes place in each man's conscience, where within himself the books shall be opened, and God shall reveal the hidden things of darkness, and every man shall be the judge of his own actions and thoughts.

The corporeal images used of future punishment in the Scriptures and in the Fathers are used for the sake of the simple faithful. It is absurd to think of hell as a place under the earth, for the earth shall altogether perish. How can a place remain when there is nothing local, or a time when there is nothing temporal?

The Restoration of All Things is already begun in humanity, with the Resurrection of Christ,* for in the Risen Christ there was neither male nor female. Every division is united again in Him, for, when risen, He was at once in Paradise and in the world, in heaven and on earth, and since His humanity became absolutely one with His Divinity, the divisions of the sensible and the intelligible, and of the created and the uncreated, were also resolved in Him. Christ assumed body, sense, soul, and intellect and united these in Himself, so that He was the perfect man.

Christ is impassible in His Divinity: it is only in His humanity that He can suffer. Yet the one substance of the Word and of His humanity is not separated in His Passion, for the humanity of Christ suffers *(passus)* and His Divinity sympathises with it *(compassus)*.

The Incarnation benefited man by way of redemption, and the angels by way of knowledge.

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*Bett remarks that "there is an absence of all historic sense in Erigena's references to Christ" (p. 107), and that "the love of God is never definitely conceived in his system of the universe" (p. 142). He also comments upon "the surprisingly few theological details in which we are reminded that our philosopher was a medieval Catholic" (p. 77).

The restoration of humanity in Christ is twofold. It is one thing to return to Paradise, which is human nature as first created, and another thing to eat of the Tree of Life, which is Christ.

In the *adunatio* [reunion], the inferior in each case passes into the superior, until at last all is reunited with God, and is one in Him. Yet there is no confusion and no destruction of essence or substance. Many may be one, without ceasing to be many. Many people may see one thing, and see it all at once, as when a crowd is watching the golden ball on a spire, and no one says, Take away your glance, so that I may see what you see! for all can see it together.

The return of all things to God is the accomplishment of a vast cycle, smaller analogies of which abound in the world.

In the whole process of return seven stages are to be distinguished: (1) The earthly body passes into vital motion, (2) the vital motion into sense, (3) sense into reason, (4) reason into soul (these five—body, vital motion, sense, reason, soul—thus become one), (5) soul into knowledge, (6) knowledge into wisdom, (7) the supernatural passage *(occasus)* of the purified soul (which has now become wisdom) into God. The *five* (which are united in the first four stages) and the *three* (the last three stages) make the mystical eight [the supernatural cube].

Let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind, until the light shall come which makes darkness of the false light of philosophers, and changes the darkness of those who think rightly into light.

The Calm Self

The wise man should restrain the activity of the outer organs, such as speech, etc., and abide within the mind only; he should further restrain the mind, which is intent on doubtful external objects, within intelligence, whose characteristic mark is decision, recognizing that indecision is evil; he should further restrain intelligence within the Great Self, *i.e.,* the individual soul, or else the fundamental intellect; he should finally fix the Great Self on the Calm Self, *i.e.,* the Highest Self, the Highest Goal.

—*Vedanta Sutra*

"THE WEAPON OF KARMA"

[The following article was first published by Wm. Q. Judge in the department, "The Screen of Time," in *The Path,* March, 1896. Dr. Anna Bonus Kingsford was a member of the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society, and also, for a time, its President. Well-known as a seeress, medium and strict vegetarian, Dr. Kingsford retained a strong tendency toward Christian mysticism, and was the author of *The Perfect Way, or the Finding of Christ* (1882). Dr. Kingsford is said to have been a "natural-born" clairvoyant, but it is also stated that "unless the Clairvoyant or SEER can get beyond this plane of illusion, he can never see the Truth, but will be drowned in an ocean of self-deception and hallucinations" (*Transactions,* p. 96). The present article, reviewing the memoir by her associate, E. Maitland, suggests some qualifications as to *psychic* means and an excessive iconoclasm. The title used is our own.—Eds. THEOSOPHY.]

MR. Edward Maitland has recently issued a memoir of Dr. Anna Kingsford, in which there is an interesting account of her continuous attack on vivisection and vivisectionists. So bitter was her feeling against all those who practised this form of "scientific research," as it is called, that she claimed to have turned the force of her will against two of them with a view to their destruction—with success, she afterwards said. Certain it is that the two vivisectionists died. Elated by her achievement, she wrote to Mme. Blavatsky proposing a joint psychic onslaught on these miserable sinners wherever they could be found, in the hope of killing them off *en masse.* To this proposal H.P.B. is recorded as having replied in the following clear and noteworthy words:

"I feel sure and know that Master approves your opposing the principle of vivisection, but not the practical way you do it, injuring yourself and doing injury to others, without much benefitting the poor animals. Of course it is Karma in the case of Paul Bert. But so it is in the case of *every murdered man.* Nevertheless the weapon of Karma, unless he acts unconsciously, is a murderer in the sight of that same Karma that used him. Let us work against the *principle,* then; not against personalities. For it is a weed that requires more than seven, or seven times seven, of us to extirpate it."

H.P.B.'s words are of great importance. Mania to act as Chief Executioner of all disapproved and disapprovable things was not confined to Anna Kingsford. Members of the Theosophical Society have been known to burn with a passionate longing to act as agents for Karma, forgetting that the sword of the Executioner is a two-edged sword; forgetting also that they do not know Karma, and are held responsible by Karma for the mischief they will inevitably work. The absurdity of such an attitude of mind does not deprive it of a certain pathetic aspect. See these people, impure themselves, thinking they can either forcibly purify the world or can legitimately punish others for their impurity! The pathetic aspect comes in when they are so deluded as to call the proceeding "self-sacrifice." It would be real self-sacrifice for such people to sit still and attend to their immediate duty.

"The Least Objectionable Religion"

After our own holy religion, which indubitably is the only good one, what religion would be the least objectionable?

Would it not be that which should be the simplest; that which should teach much morality and very few dogmas; that which should tend to make men just, without making them absurd; that which should not ordain the belief of things impossible, contradictory, injurious to the Divinity, and pernicious to mankind; nor dare to threaten with eternal pains whosoever should possess common sense?

* * * * *

If a man would persuade foreigners, or his own countrymen, of the truth of his religion, should he not go about it with the most insinuating mildness and the most engaging moderation? If he begins with telling them that what he announces is demonstrated, he will find a multitude of persons incredulous; if he ventures to tell them that they reject his doctrine only inasmuch as it condemns their passions; that their hearts have corrupted their minds; that their reasoning is only false and proud, he disgusts them; he incenses them against himself; he himself ruins what he would fain establish.

—Voltaire

THE MEANING OF "RACE"

A RECENT book on the origin of man, *Human Ancestry,* by R. Ruggles Gates (Harvard University Press) asserts that new developments in anthropology and genetics have seriously undermined the theory of a single common ancestry for the human species. The author declares that "The majority of anthropologists recognize that this simple picture does not correspond with fact, but that there have been multiple centers of man's evolution involving again a certain amount of parallelism." Professor Gates (emeritus, University of London) proposes a theory of multiple human origins involving three anthropoid-ape progenitors and five contemporary species. A New York *Times* review of "this strange book" suggests that Professor Gates has extremely questionable authority for his assertion, but—the validity of any particular hypothesis aside—it is of interest to note research and speculation tending toward the theosophical teaching that man has a polygenetic origin.

When H. P. Blavatsky's *The Secret Doctrine* was published in 1888, with half its pages devoted to anthropogenesis, several prominent members of the Theosophical Society were engaged in disputing among themselves certain portions of the theosophical teaching on evolution. The phases of the subject thus receiving attention, however, were selected for *intellectual* as distinguished from educational considerations, and the ethical import of the general doctrine was largely ignored. The disputes about "rings and rounds," planetary chains, and the precession of the Monads from globe to globe, occupied the mental energies of Englishmen whose Adept Teachers had spoken in no uncertain terms about the responsibility of the British in India, and of the need for theosophists, above all, to recognize the need for *veneration* of Asia.

H. P. Blavatsky, refuting the preconceptions of Dr. Albrecht Weber—a German Orientalist and Sanscrit authority who would have reduced Indian history to a footnote on European civilization —took occasion to mention that "Weber's idea that the Indo-Germanic race preceded the Aryan *Vedic* Race is, to the Occultist, grotesque to the last degree" (*S.D.* II, 166). However weird Dr. Weber's bias in the light of current anthropology and a new

appreciation of the profundity of Eastern culture and philosophy, a strong portion of the same type of arrant egotism drew a large section of Europe under the banner of "Nordic superiority." Teachings and speculation regarding the origins of races have a profound influence and every erroneous interpretation will some day create its measure of support for a form of racial prejudice. The present-day student is led to wonder, also, how much more prepared the present theosophical movement *might have been* for the international "conflict situations" of this century, if the full implications of H.P.B.'s teachings on "race" had been assimilated. Was the footnote on pages 42-3 of *The Key to Theosophy* included only in illustration of the perversion of a Biblical text?

The student of Theosophy, in this generation, comes freshly upon the recorded teachings of H. P. Blavatsky and Wm. Q. Judge, and is at liberty to read out of them as much or as little as he may. The race question, for one, can no longer be dismissed as theoretical. The speculations and prejudices, the dogmas and opinions of anthropologists, geneticists, and biologists have, after all, a bearing on human events. Whether one believes man to be eighteen millions of years old, or six thousand; whether man's "divine origin" stems from a hierarchy of mind-beings, or a single God made in man's image; whether civilization and *karma* began on former continents and even in previous evolutionary cycles, or arose miraculously out of a primordial foam; whether individuals support a spiritual or a materialistic view of man's origin and destiny—each belief and conviction, true or false, begins a chain reaction to be measured eventually in human progress or defeat.

The meaning of "race" in theosophical terminology is, like all tenets of the philosophy, a problem for individual study. Testing the merit of any one conclusion is equally the responsibility of the student himself. But this much is evident: one who subscribes to the First Object needs to become familiar with the propositions of Theosophy concerning human *differences,* in order that the phrase, "without distinction of race, creed, caste or color," may express something more stable than a sentiment, and more intelligent than a wishful dream of spurious "equality."

The Secret Doctrine outlines a scheme of evolution covering every department of nature, visible and invisible, and all degrees

of intelligence and capacity among living beings. The history of the earth and its companion planets, as sketched in H. P. Blavatsky's volumes, extends over millions of years and involves countless varieties of form and environment. Nevertheless, the unifying principles will be found few in number and not difficult for the unprejudiced mind to grasp.

A collation of *Secret Doctrine* statements on the origin of human differences might well begin with page 249 of Volume II, where the "modified polygenesis" of the esoteric philosophy is described. Humanity, though one in origin and all evolving from divine beings, is hierarchically divided by "different classes or degrees of perfection," distinguished from each other in "potentialities and mental capabilities, outward or physical forms, and future characteristics." A footnote explains:

> Some superior, others inferior, *to suit the Karma* of the various reincarnating Monads which could not be all of the same degree of purity in their last births in other worlds. This accounts for the difference of races, the inferiority of the savage, and other human varieties.

The Commentary, a scripture used by H. P. Blavatsky to clarify the more obscure sections of the Book of Dzyan on which the *Secret Doctrine* is based, is quoted (II, 28-9) on the celestial governors of humanity, and in a footnote on the "*seven First-born* (the primordial human groups)," H.P.B. connects this sevenfold division of races with the "sevening" throughout nature: the seven principles, she states, are allied to seven states of matter and the seven forms of force. The same division of "Seven Lords and Seven men," three "holy and good, four less heavenly and full of passion," is given in another book of the "Mysteries," and Mme. Blavatsky remarks that "This accounts for the differences in human nature, which is divided into seven gradations of good and evil. There were seven tabernacles ready to be inhabited by Monads under seven different Karmic conditions. The Commentaries explain on this basis the easy spread of evil, as soon as the human Forms had become real men." (An interesting classification of the "spheres of action" in which work the "combined Forces of Evolution and Karma," is given, II, 621 fn.)

The event of the incarnation of mind-beings into forms prepared by human evolution in the early cycles, and the several degrees of

the "lighting up of Manas" has an important bearing on the question of racial differences. On the Lemurian continent, the second before the present alignment of lands and water on the globe, and the scene of the manasic incarnation, there were already civilized people and savages (*S.D.* II, 317). "Evolution" perfected some spiritual races in whom the "Sons of Wisdom" had personally incarnated, and "Karma" destroyed others who "instead of vivifying the spark dropped into them by the 'Flames,' extinguished it by long generations of bestiality." Again a footnote reiterates that the great variation in the intellectual capacities of races, nations, and individual men finds here an explanation. "The incarnating Powers and Principles," H.P.B. writes, "had to make their choice between, and take into account, the past Karmas of the *Monads,* between which and their bodies they had to become the connecting link." (II, 318 fn. See also II, 161 and 303.)

The "historical" basis for human differences advanced in *The Secret Doctrine,* then, does not depend upon the fiat or whim of an incomprehensible Deity, nor upon an equally mysterious "natural" selection. Expressions of individuality among men are given their true place as *egoic* characteristics apart from all superficial or social distinctions of "race, creed, caste or color." Tracing the differences among men to their own efforts and karma, the *Secret Doctrine* treats of the sevenfold division of humanity in terms of individual responsibility and potentiality. The real differentiation between classes of Egos is a matter of inner evolution, of the status of the soul.

The theosophist, whose purpose is to exemplify and promulgate ideas that will liberate man from all supposed restrictions on his creative Will, puzzles over "the mysterious Septenary Cycle" said to be "present and acting in Kosmos, in general, in its natural (though occult) divisions of time, races, and *mental* development" (*S. D.* II, 623 fn.)—and remembers that all classifications are only symbols of *states of consciousness.* The seven globes or "principles" of the Earth chain, though united in one mass, differ from each other in substance, Mr. Judge points out, "due to change of centre of consciousness" *in man.* (*The Ocean of Theosophy,* p. 24.) What else can constitute the essential difference between Egos, and the theosophical meaning of "race"?

YOUTH-COMPANIONS ASK—

IS it possible for a person to live without the joy of life, or the thirst for life, or whatever name you give to the feeling that it's good to be alive? Is this part of the make-up of the perfected man?

The word H. P. Blavatsky used to describe this is *Tanha,* which she termed "the desire to live and clinging to life on this earth." Tanha is more than simply the feeling of well-being, of course, since men born and spending lives in great misery still cling to life. The question of whether or not a man can live without this feeling or force depends for answer on what "man" we are talking about. The existence of the body, the astral body, and the kamic body—man's lower principles—is inextricably bound up with Tanha. None of these have any other dimension to their present consciousness than the experiencing of sensation.

Spiritual man, on the other hand, though needing these lower bodies in order to exist in matter, has a different impulsion for that existence. Spirit incarnates to gain knowledge and experience, not simply pleasurable sensations. There is a passage in the *Secret Doctrine* (II, 109-110) which makes this clear, for it describes the dual force in man's evolution as being that of the Monad and that of the "lower astral body or the personal self."

Tanha is the force of unsatisfied desires, carrying over from one day to the next, or from life to life. These desires have in themselves no positive value in human evolution, but they do serve to draw the man within reach of needed experience. When we speak of a perfected man who has "risen beyond the pairs of opposites," we mean that the mind-man has assumed control and direction, instead of being led into activity by the desires of the psychic nature. The perfected man may be said to have the force of Tanha, or the "joy of life," as the natural product of his lower instruments, but he has it under control and is not dependent on these "enthusiasms" for the motor power of his existence. We don't have to be, either.

How far is it safe to go, in trusting other people?

Two further questions may be asked about this one, before we attempt an answer: In the first place, what part of ourselves are

we trying to keep "safe," and what part of other people are we trying to trust? If the answer to both of these questions involves our own self-interest, or our hopes for our own safety, we are bound to be disappointed.

There are, we need to see, innumerable possibilities for good and evil in every human being. No matter what present character a person is exhibiting, the very fact that he is a *man* means that at any moment in the future, altered circumstances or a changed attitude of mind may bring to the front a completely different aspect of his nature. Of one thing we can be sure—as long as a man is a man, he cannot be "trusted" to be either completely god-like or completely devilish.

How are we to gauge men, and how best to work so that the good will be drawn out, and the evil receive no encouragement from our actions? This is a fundamental problem, and when we try to solve it, we'll find out whether we are optimists or pessimists about the human race. From one point of view, it would seem that the only man who is really and consistently cynical about the trustworthiness of other people is the man who has seriously disappointed himself. Most of us alternate between hope and cynicism. We get our ability to trust others from being able to trust ourselves, and from taking notice of how our performance improves when others are optimistic of our capacity.

Can we not think that fearing the worst of another person (or, what is more usual, fearing for ourselves if the "worst" should appear in him) actually attracts the very evil it seeks to avoid? If, as Mr. Judge wrote in the *Ocean,* "every thought makes a physical as well as mental link with the desire in which it is rooted," the desire to avoid something can bind us just as closely to a thing as the desire to obtain it. With this realization, a man could gradually bring himself to stop acting and reacting on the basis of what the *Voice* calls "selfish fear," and begin to think of other people as at least partly, or potentially, *good* people.

Suppose we were to act on the basis that the current of our thoughts exerts a powerful influence on the variously-compounded "middle soul" of every being we contact. The student of Theosophy comes more and more to respect the potency of the human will and the "mysterious power of thought which enables it to produce

external, perceptible, phenomenal results by its own inherent energy." A man gains more faith in human nature as he sees that persistent effort can change it—in himself. Once having erased the depressing idea that the present status quo is the inevitable blueprint of the future, he can move constructively with others.

While it may be true that strain results from doing something we don't want to do—from working with a divided mind, so to say—yet it often happens that strain is produced by too much concentration on a certain thing which we want very much to do. How can this be explained?

In the first place, is it ever possible to concentrate too much? We can concentrate too *long* on something, perhaps, but not too well. If that is the case, we will have to meet the stresses which inevitably result from attempts to do all the things we feel we ought to do after having spent too much time on something else. But for the length of time that the mind is actually concentrated on one thing, it is not subject to strain. Strain means a conflict of forces.

It is often difficult to tell at exactly what point complete concentration ceases with the intrusion of another train of thought, however. Nor is it only dislike of the task at hand that "divides" the mind. Attention may wander on too far ahead of present activities, perhaps, and the person will find himself straining to see and provide for future possible needs to the neglect of more immediate necessities. A parallel to this kind of strain is described in a book on eye troubles as the habit some drivers have of keeping their eyes fixed on the "vanishing point" of the horizon, causing the passing landscape (seen more or less involuntarily out of the corners of their eyes) to blur and swim in their vision.

The corresponding psychological state is that of either the "impractical dreamer" or the "anxiety-ridden" individual. Both are more concerned about the future than the present. There is a fitness in concern about the future, but the only way of really satisfying that concern is by giving concentrated and specific attention to the present. This means weighing the causes now being set in motion, for the future is only a word for the time when present causes will have become effects. The real vision is of the *eternal*—not fleeting—NOW.

"THEOSOPHIST" EDITORIAL NOTES

X: The Nature of the Sun

THE "Adepts," who are thus forced to demolish before they can reconstruct, deny most emphatically *(a)* that the Sun is in combustion, in any ordinary sense of the word; or *(b)* that he is *incandescent* or even *burning* though he is *glowing;* or *(c)* that his luminosity has already begun to weaken and his power of combustion may be exhausted within a given and conceivable time; or even *(d)* that his chemical and physical constitution contains any of the elements of terrestrial chemistry in any of the states that either chemist or physicist is acquainted with. With reference to the latter, they add that, properly speaking, though the body of the Sun—a body that was never yet reflected by telescope or spectroscope that man invented—cannot be said to be constituted of those terrestrial elements with the state of which the chemist is familiar, yet that these elements are all present in the sun's outward robes, and a host more of elements unknown so far to science.

There seems little need, indeed, to have waited so long for the lines belonging to these respective elements to correspond with dark lines of the solar spectrum to *know* that no element present on our earth could ever be possibly found wanting in the sun; although, on the other hand, there are many others in the sun which have either not reached or not as yet been discovered on our globe. Some may be missing in certain stars and heavenly bodies still in the process of formation; or, properly speaking, though present in them, these elements on account of their undeveloped state may not respond as yet to the usual scientific tests. But how can the earth possess that which the Sun has never had? The "Adepts" affirm as a fact that the true *Sun*—an invisible orb of which the known one is the shell, mask, or clothing—has in him the spirit of every element that exists in the solar system; and his "Chromosphere," as Mr. Lockyer named it, has the same, only in a far more developed condition, though still in a state unknown on earth; our planet having to await its further growth and development before any of its

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Note.—This is the third excerpt from "Reply to an English F.T.S.," which originally appeared in *The Theosophist,* September, 1883.—Eds. Theosophy.

elements can be reduced to the condition they are in within that chromosphere. Nor can the substance producing the coloured light in the latter be properly called solid, liquid, or even "gaseous," as now supposed, for it is neither. Thousands of years before Leverrier and Padri Secchi, the old Aryans sung of *Soorya*. . . . "hiding behind his *Yogi** robes his head that no one could see"; the ascetic's dress being, as all know, dyed expressly into a red-yellow hue, a colouring matter with pinkish patches on it, rudely representing the vital principle in man's blood—the symbol of the *vital principle* in the sun, or what is now called chromosphere. The "rose-colored region"! How little astronomers will ever know of its real nature even though hundreds of eclipses furnish them with the *indisputable evidence* of its presence. The sun is so thickly surrounded by a *shell* of the "red matter," that it is useless for them to speculate with only the help of their physical instruments, upon the nature of that which they can never see or detect with mortal eye behind that brilliant, *radiant* zone of matter. . . .

If the "Adepts" are asked: "What then, in your views, is the nature of our sun and what is there beyond that cosmic veil?"—they answer: *beyond* rotates and beats the *heart and head* of our system; externally is spread its robe, the nature of which is not matter, whether solid, liquid, or gaseous, such as you are acquainted with, but *vital* electricity, condensed and made visible.† And if the statement is objected to on the grounds that were the luminosity of the sun due to any other cause than *combustion* and *flame,* no physical law of which Western Science has any knowledge, could account for the existence of such intensely high temperature of the

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*There is an interesting story in the Puranas relating to this subject. The Devas, it would appear, asked the great Rishi Vasishta to bring the Sun into Satya Loka. The Rishi there went and requested the Sun-god to do so. The Sun-god replied that all the worlds would be destroyed if he were to leave his place. The Rishi then offered to place his red-coloured cloth *(Kashay Vastram)* in the place of the Sun's disk and did so. The visible body of the Sun is this robe of Vasishta, it would seem.—T. Subba Row *(Acting Editor)*.

†If the "English F.T.S." would take the trouble of consulting p. 11 of the "Magis Adamica" of Eugenius Philalethes his learned compatriot, he would find therein the difference between a visible and an invisible planet as clearly hinted at as it was safe to do at a time when the iron claw of orthodoxy had the power as well as disposition, to tear the flesh from heretic bones. "The earth is invisible" —says he—. . . "and which is more, the *eye of man never saw the earth,* nor can it be *seen* without *art.* To make this element visible is *the greatest secret in magic*. . . . As for this feculent, gross body upon which we walk, it is a *compost,*

sun *without combustion;* that such a temperature, besides burning with its light and flame every visible thing in our universe, would show its luminosity of a homogeneous and uniform intensity throughout, which it does not; that undulations and disturbances in the photosphere, the growing of the "protuberances," and a fierce raging of elements in combustion have been observed in the sun, with their tongues of fire and spots exhibiting every appearance of cyclonic motion, and "solar storms," etc., etc.; to this the only answer that can be given is the following: the appearances are all there, yet it is not combustion.

Undoubtedly were the "robes," the dazzling drapery which now envelopes the whole of the sun's globe withdrawn, or even "the shining atmosphere *which permits us to see the sun*" (as Sir William Herschel thought) removed so as to allow one trifling rent—our whole universe would be reduced to ashes. *Jupiter Fulminator* revealing himself to his beloved would incinerate her instantly. But it can never be. The protecting shell is of a thickness, and at a distance from the universal HEART that can hardly be ever calculated by your mathematicians. And how can they hope to see the sun's *inner* body once that the existence of that "chromosphere" is ascertained, though its actual density may be still unknown, when one of the greatest, if not *the* greatest of their authorities—Sir W. Herschel—says the following: "The sun, also, has its *atmosphere,* and if some of the fluids which enter into its composition should be of a shining brilliancy, while others are merely transparent, *any temporary cause which may remove the lucid fluid will permit us to see the body of the sun* through the transparent ones." The underlined words written nearly 80 years ago embody the wrong hypothesis that the *body of the sun* might be seen under such circumstances, whereas it is only the far away layers of "the lucid fluid" that would be perceived. And what the great astronomer adds invalidates entirely the first portion of his assumption. "If an observer were placed on the moon, he would see the solid body

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and no earth but *it hath earth in it* . . . in a word all the *elements are visible* but *one,* namely, the *earth;* and when thou hast attained to so much *perfection* as to know why *God* hath placed the *earth in abscondito* thou hast an excellent figure whereby to know *God himself,* and how he is *visible,* how *invisible.*" The italics are the author's, it being the custom of the Alchemists to emphasize those words which had a double meaning in their code. Here "God himself" *visible* and *invisible,* relates to their *lapis philosophorum*—Nature's seventh principle.

of our earth *only in those places where the transparent fluids of the atmosphere would permit him.* In others, the opaque vapors would reflect the light of the sun without permitting his view to penetrate to the surface of our globe." Thus, if the atmosphere of our earth, which in its relation to the "atmosphere" (?) of the sun is like the tenderest skin of a fruit compared with the thickest husk of a cocoanut, would prevent the eye of an observer standing on the moon to penetrate everywhere "to the surface of our globe," how can an astronomer ever hope his sight to penetrate to the *sun's* surface, from our earth and at a distance of from 85 to 95 million miles*, whereas the moon, we are told, is only about 238,000 miles! The proportionately larger size of the sun does not bring him any nearer within the scope of our physical vision.

Truly remarks Sir W. Herschel that the sun "has been called a globe of fire, *perhaps metaphorically*"! It has been *supposed* that the dark spots were solid bodies revolving near the sun's surface. "They have been *conjectured* to be the smoke of volcanoes . . . the scum floating upon an ocean of fluid matter. . . . They have been *taken* for clouds . . . *explained* to be opaque masses swimming in the *fluid matter* of the sun. . . ." Alone, of all astronomers, Sir John Herschel, whose *intuition* was still greater than his great learning, came—all anthropomorphic conceptions set aside—far nearer truth than any of those modern astronomers who, while admiring his gigantic learning, smile at his "imaginative and fanciful theories." His only mistake, now shared by most astronomers, was that he regarded the "opaque body" occasionally observed through the curtain of his "luminous envelope" as the sun itself. When saying in the course of his speculations upon the Nasmyth willow-leaf theory: —"the definite shape of these objects; their exact similarity one to another. . . . all these characters seem quite repugnant to the notion of their being of a vaporous, a cloudy, or a fluid nature"—his spiritual intuition served him better than his remarkable knowledge of physical science. When he adds: "Nothing remains but to consider them *as separate and independent sheets,* flakes. . . . . having *some sort of solidity* . . . . . Be they what they may, they are evidently *the immediate sources of the solar light and heat*"—he utters a

*Verily—"*absolute accuracy* in the solution of this problem (of distances between the heavenly bodies and the earth) is *simply out of question!*"

grander physical truth than was ever uttered by any living astronomer. And, when furthermore, we find him postulating—"looked at in this point of view, we cannot refuse to regard them as *organisms* of some peculiar and amazing kind; and though it would be too daring to speak of such organization as partaking of the nature of life, yet *we do know that vital action is competent to develop at once heat, and light, and electricity,*" Sir John Herschel gives out a theory approximating an occult truth more than any profane ever did with regard to solar physics.

These "wonderful objects" are not, as a modern astronomer interprets Sir J. Herschel's words, "*solar inhabitants,* whose fiery constitution enables them to illuminate, warm and electricise the whole solar system," but simply the reservoirs of solar vital energy, the *vital* electricity that feeds the whole system in which it lives, and breathes, and has its being. It is, as we say, the store-house of our little cosmos, self-generating its vital fluid, and ever receiving as much as it gives out. Were the astronomers to be asked—what definite and positive fact exists at the root of their solar theory;—what knowledge they have of solar combustion and atmosphere—they might, perchance, feel embarrassed when confronted with all their present theories. For, it is sufficient to make a *résumé* of what the solar physicists *do not know,* to gain conviction that they are as far as ever from a definite knowledge of the constitution and ultimate nature of the heavenly bodies. We may, perhaps, be permitted to enumerate:—

Beginning with, as Mr. Proctor wisely calls it, "the wildest assumption possible," that there is, in accordance with the law of analogy, some general resemblance between the materials in, and the processes at work upon the Sun, and those materials with which terrestrial chemistry and physics are familiar, what is that sum of results achieved by spectroscopic and other analyses of the surface and the inner constitution of the sun, which warrants any one in establishing the *axiom* of the Sun's combustion and gradual extinction? They have no means, as they themselves daily confess, of experimenting upon, hence of determining the sun's physical condition; for *(a)* they are ignorant of the atmospheric limits; *(b)* even though it were proved that *matter,* such as they know of, is continuously falling upon the sun, being ignorant of its real velocity

and the nature of the material it falls upon, they are unable "to discuss the effect of motions wholly surpassing in velocity . . . . . enormously exceeding even the inconceivable velocity of many meteors"; *(c)* confessedly—they "have no means of learning whence that part of the light comes which gives the continuous spectrum" . . . . , hence no means of determining how great a depth of the solar substance is concerned in sending out that light. This light "may come from the surface layers only"; and, "it may be but a shell. . . . . " (truly!); and finally, *(d)* they have yet to learn "how far combustion, properly so called, can take place within the Sun's mass' "; and "whether these processes, which we (they) recognize as combustion are the only processes of combustion which can actually take place there." Therefore, Mr. Proctor for one comes to the happy and prudent idea after all "that what had been supposed the most marked characteristic of incandescent solid and liquid bodies, is thus shown to be a possible characteristic of the light of the glowing gas." Thus, the whole basis of their reasoning having been shaken (by Frankland's objection), they, the astronomers, may yet arrive at accepting the occult theory, viz., that they have to look to the 6th state of matter, for divulging to them the true nature of their photospheres, chromospheres, appendages, prominences, projections and horns. Indeed, when one finds the greatest authority of the age in physical science—Prof. Tyndall—saying that "no earthly substance with which we are acquainted—no substance which the fall of meteors has landed on the earth—*would be at all competent to maintain* the Sun's combustion"; and again: —". . . multiplying all our powers by millions of millions, we do not reach the Sun's expenditure. And still, notwithstanding this enormous drain in the lapse of human history, we are unable to detect a diminution of his store . . ."—after reading this, to see the men of science maintaining still their theory of "a hot globe cooling," one may be excused for feeling surprised at such inconsistency. Verily is that great physicist right in viewing the sun himself as "a speck in infinite extension—a mere drop in the Universal sea"; and saying that, "to nature nothing can be added; from nature nothing can be taken away; the sum of her energy is constant, and the utmost man can do in the pursuit of physical truth, or in the applications of physical knowledge, *is to shift the constituents of*

the never-varying total. The law of conservation rigidly excludes both creation and annihilation . . . . . the flux of power is eternally the same." Mr. Tyndall speaks here as though he were an Occultist. Yet, the *memento mori,*—"the Sun is cooling . . . it is dying! . . ." of the Western Trappists of Science resounds as loud as it ever did.

No, we say; no, while there is one man left on the globe, the sun will not be extinguished. Before the hour of the "Solar Pralaya" strikes on the watch-tower of Eternity, all the other worlds of our system will be gliding in their spectral shells along the silent paths of Infinite Space. Before it strikes, Atlas, the mighty Titan, the son of Asia and the nursling of Æther, will have dropped his heavy manvantaric burden and—died; the Pleiades, the bright seven Sisters, will have upon awakening hiding Sterope to grieve with them—*to die themselves for their father's loss.* And, Hercules, *moving off his left leg,* will have to shift his place in heavens and erect his own funeral pile. Then only, surrounded by the fiery element breaking through the thickening gloom of the *Pralayan* twilight, will Hercules, *expiring amidst a general conflagration,* bring on likewise the death of our Sun: *he will have unveiled by moving off* the "CENTRAL SUN"—the mysterious, the ever-hidden centre of attraction of our Sun and System. Fables? Mere poetical fiction? Yet, when one knows that the most exact sciences, the greatest mathematical and astronomical truths went forth into the world among the *hoi polloi* sent out by the initiated priests, the Hierophants of the *sanctum sanctorum* of the old temples, under the guise of religious fables, it may not be amiss to search for universal truths even under the patches of fiction's harlequinade. This *fable* about the Pleiades, the *seven* Sisters, Atlas, and Hercules exists identical in subject, though under other names, in the sacred Hindu books, and has likewise the same occult meaning. But then like the *Ramayana* "borrowed from the Greek *Iliad*" and the Bhagavat-Gita and Krishna plagiarized from the Gospel—in the opinion of the *great* Sanskritist, Prof. Weber, the Aryans may have also borrowed the Pleiades and their Hercules from the same source! When the Brahmins can be shown by the Christian Orientalists to be the direct descendants of the Teutonic Crusaders, then only, perchance, will the cycle of proofs be completed, and the historical truths of the West—vindicated!

THE UNSEIZABLE ULTIMATE

DEEP indeed are the mysteries of the seeming flow of events that give the notion of "time." Says the *Gita:*

> All worlds up to that of Brahman are subject to rebirth again and again, but they, O son of Kunti, who reach to me have no rebirth. Those who are acquainted with day and night know that the day of Brahma is a thousand revolutions of the yugas and that his night extendeth for a thousand more.

The footnote explains that "those who are acquainted with day and night" refers to those who know the ultimate divisions of time —who are perfect Yogis.

Man constantly thinks himself to be on the point of finding, or at least calculating, the "ultimate" in this, that, or everything. But every attempt to do so in reality leads to the incomprehensible. Regard, for instance, a simple circle inscribed on paper. Here is something surely tangible enough; the thing is real, under our hand and eye, with all its dimensions clear. Certainly, if it exists at all, the length of the line that makes it is measurable, as is its diameter. Both being thus measurable, surely the ratio between them is a definite quantity. But not so. The mystic ratio "pi," usually written 3.1416, has been carried out to beyond 700 decimal places; the effort only leading to the conclusion that we can never know its true value—only approximations. Here lies the ungraspable, a maddening mathematical impossibility, in the innocent guise of the simplest of figures; simplest, because completely in sight, unlike the straight line whose beginning and end is lost in infinity before and behind. A similar mystery involves every repeating decimal; each of which presents a visible fraction never wholly measurable.

But time eludes us in like manner. Say we choose any formal division of it, a minute, if we like; then this can easily be divided in two, the half into quarters, the quarter into eighths, and so forth. But does it not become quickly evident that we can continue this throughout eternity, achieving the ever smaller but never reaching an "ultimate"? This is but to say that we can never find a "present," because the "present" must consist of a final moment that cannot be divided. No such moment can exist in *this* plane—hence the present is always an illusion. The past, being only the collectivity

of "presents" that have expired, a mental after-image of the non-existent, can likewise have no real existence; nor the "future," which is only the collectivity of "presents" marching toward us.

The modern conception of "quantized time," holding that time flows in separate pulses, does not help—though it does extend the law of cycles in a new direction! If time is quantized, then the quanta themselves are also divisible. And if time is quantized, then he who knows the quanta also knows how to slip between into—what? Eternity—to be experienced in the intervals between time's pulsations, each of which may be a billionth of a second long?

Nor can the "ultimate division" of matter be found. H. P. Blavatsky reasoned from the universal phenomenon of elasticity that every particle of matter, however small, must be divisible. But this only means that it cannot exist as an actual thing and is only a concept. The divisibility of matter and the divisibility of space are the same; no matter how small may be a volume of space, it can be infinitely subdivided. Where, then, is tangible or measurable space? Unable to find the ultimate in the infinitesimal, can we find it in the infinite? Never; no matter how great a space of time, how great a volume of space, that we may conceive, we can multiply it. Man stands between "ultimates" of time, space, and matter, that vanish into nothingness toward the infinitely small; into eternity and infinitude toward the vast. And no whit of it real other than *himself* and his thoughts. Indeed is he a "perfect yogi" who has mastered this, knows that no reality can or does exist in so-called "matter" or "time" or "space"!

Again the unreachable ultimate appears:

> All this universe is pervaded by me in my invisible form; all things exist in me, but I do not exist in them. Nor are all things in me; behold this my divine mystery; myself causing things to exist and supporting them all but dwelling not in them.

This paradox cannot be resolved by any man who places himself outside of nature; but can be understood by those who know that "nature" is their own product as an extension of Self.

The secret is the irreducible residue, the ever-existing left-over. A man may say to himself: "I have such and such passions and desires, good, bad and indifferent; I will or will not change this

situation." But then what is the man and what his desires? Clearly not the same, otherwise "he" could not consider them as an object. Struck by this clear fact that "he" is not his desires, he then says "I" observe that "I" have those desires. What *is* this "I" that first observed them? Thus the observer becomes the observed. "I now see that there is an 'I' that observed an 'I' in process of observing these traits!" Where does this leave "him"? "He" may uncover within himself depth upon depth of "subconscious" knowledge, of hidden powers, of immemorial secrets of his past; at each retreat within leaving behind, on guard, another "I"; and never find the ultimate "I," over however much of time and however great a volume of experience and contemplation. Here is another "ultimate" —the very consciousness upon which our being hangs—that can never be discovered, that always remains over, beyond, and free of any deed or knowledge or limitation or restriction. He himself is this "pervader in invisible form"; but as an object, a tangible thing, an individual thing, the "pervader" is never to be discovered and never to be limited. Whatever It is engaged with, there is as much of "IT" beyond as ever. Thus it cannot be bounded.

> These acts do not bind me, O conqueror of wealth, because I am as one who sitteth indifferent, uninterested in those works. By reason of my supervision nature produceth the animate and inanimate universe; it is through this cause, O son of Kunti, that the universe revolveth.

PERCEPTIONS OF SPIRIT

All our powers rest upon the One Spiritual Nature. The limitations placed upon the power to express are not made by any external force whatever, but made by ourselves, by the ideas that we hold. Our range of perception is governed by the ideas we hold in regard to ourselves, our nature, and the life about us. These ideas that control our physical lives and our minds are, in fact, the limitations in ourselves; yet, however varied, however high, however low they may be, their very permanency rests on the Spirit itself and every one of them springs from perceptions of Spirit. Whatever differences we may be able to perceive in any other are not differences of Spirit, but differences in range of perception.

—R.C.

ON THE LOOKOUT

"Where We Came In"

What children can look forward to as adults (and what far too many children today are experiencing long before maturity) is described in a recent column by Bosley Crowther, movie critic of the New York *Times.* In his Sunday piece on Aug. 29, Mr. Crowther makes a strong point, notwithstanding a justifiable plaintiveness:

> For a fellow just back from a three-week complete separation from the screen [he begins], the past week of local movie-going has proved quite a harsh experience. Somehow, we'd seemed to have forgotten that it was really as brutal as this. In the first place, the tops of last week's pictures dumped us savagely back again into the realms of murder and corruption which seem most favored by Hollywood. People were killing other people for the mere motivation of a plot—and, of course, for the suppositional pleasure of us presumably blood-thirsty souls. But after knocking around with three youngsters on a beach and in boats and such, this usually offhand observer found it just a bit hard to absorb. Sure, kids are sanguinary creatures; they love to imagine desperate deeds in which heads crack explosively like peanuts and blood drips from hyperbolic wounds. The blissful destruction of a brother is an hourly imaginary thing. And we suppose there are certain grown-up people who slyly drool at such lethal thoughts. But to see murder done in the movies, time after time after time, by supposedly real people is too much—in the first week back, at least.

"Cold and Unwholesome"

Mr. Crowther follows up with reviews of Alfred Hitchcock's *Rope* and Rosalind Russell's *The Velvet Touch,* characterizing the first as "a cold and unwholesome picture," because of its "single-tracked ghoulishness . . . unrelieved by any humor or warmth." *The Velvet Touch* had a "tedious preoccupation with corruption." Further—

> the repeated innuendo—last advanced in Ronald Colman's "A Double Life"—that the theatre and serious ambition are demoralizing thoroughly baffled us. Why this insistent conclusion that the classics conduce to homicide? Are the writers in Hollywood self-conscious? Or are they just seeking new fields for crime?

Mr. Crowther's dissatisfaction is doubtless aggravated by reason of his three-week respite from movie viewing. The "realism" of Nature and children, the *whole*someness of life outside commercialized fiction, contrasts strongly with the view—alternately sentimentalized and brutalized—presented in the ordinary movie.

CREDIT ENTRIES

On the other side of the ledger may be entered such a film as the Swiss production, *The Search,* an on-the-scene recording of the problem of displaced persons, chiefly children, in today's Europe. Occasional melodrama does not mar the main impression of the nightmare—unreal, confused, meaningless and hopeless—into which "adult" conflicts have plunged hundreds of thousands of youngsters. The streets of a shattered Berlin are a wholly appropriate background for the more tragic destruction of civilization in the persons of the war orphans.

Also, the Mexican folk tale, *The Pearl,* rendered by John Steinbeck several years ago, has been transposed to the screen with great faithfulness and intelligence. Nothing is permitted to obscure the essential tragedy (the disintegrating influence of greed upon an individual and a community), and *The Pearl*—a Mexican film—refrains from taking the usual "Hollywood" dodge and switching, at the finish, to a mock atonement and an inane "retribution."

"THE LOUISIANA STORY"

The Louisiana Story, filmed by Robert Flaherty, may be one antidote to the despairing cynicism of which Mr. Crowther complains. From an English critic in the *Manchester Guardian Weekly* (Sept. 2) the film evoked grateful tribute:

> "The Louisiana Story" is the first film by Flaherty to be seen in this country since "Elephant Boy," and it is plain indeed, as Basil Wright says, that after ten years he has returned to that earlier, purer inspiration which so distinguished "Nanook of the North" and "Moana." He has pitched away the last mechanism of prose, and the result is an undiluted poetry. For this reason alone his latest film is likely to be attacked; there are those, "social realists" and others, who can barely endure ten seconds of poetry, still less 80 minutes. . . . Like many a long poem in print it is remembered in part rather than in the whole, but to say that is to say nothing.

"The Wonder of Childhood"

> This is elegy. Its theme is the wonder of childhood—Wordsworth's great theme: the setting, the swamp land of Louisiana; the players, American oil men and a family of French Canadians who have settled among the bayous. With the clear, true vision of a child, Flaherty contemplates place, people, animal, and machine; and the lyrical intensity of his art evolves a slow statement of the marvel of life. How inadequate is the word "documentary" to describe such a work. . . .
>
> There are no professional actors, but Flaherty's character selection has been as exacting as ever and at no point is there the rude intrusion of self-consciousness. Through the eyes of a young Canadian boy—Alexander Napoleon Ulysses Latour is his splendid name—we see life in all its freshness; the slow life of the people of the creeks; the desperate divided life of the animals which inhabit the sluggish waters and of the tangled bush; the pompous but controlled advance of the machine. There is no comment, no propaganda, no uplift. There is scarcely any dialogue. The actions of these people, as Virginia Woolf once wrote of Homeric characters, "seem laden with beauty because they do not know that they are beautiful."

The *Time* magazine review (Sept. 20) quotes a statement Flaherty made "years ago," expressing a creed and a faith that merits many more adherents. Flaherty said: "I try to make my films a revelation of a country, and of the people who live in it. . . . There is a kernel of greatness in all peoples . . . it is up to the film maker to find the one incident, or even the one movement that makes it clear."

Pioneers and Re-discoveries

An insight into the pioneering of the modern art of motion pictures, and some precedent for its limitations, is to be found in James Agee's study of David Wark Griffith in *The Nation,* Sept. 2. Mr. Agee writes of Griffith that—

> He achieved what no other known man has ever achieved. To watch his work is like being witness to the beginning of melody, or the first conscious use of the lever or the wheel; the emergence, coordination, and first eloquence of language; the birth of an art: and to realize that this is all the work of one man.

It may be questioned, on principle, whether any new art or industry is ever "the work of one man," although a particular in-

dividual may be the outer focus and the visible activator. We have not yet heard of Atlantean motion pictures or of any prehistoric "screen stars," but it is highly improbable that any use of natural laws and forces could be an absolute innovation after 18 million years of "civilization." The reincarnation of arts and sciences does, however, depend upon the reappearance of Egos who retain *knowledge* of a certain sort and who can crystallize or precipitate the "new" form of expression. A karmic aspect of such "rebirth" is that the character of the re-discoverer is invariably reproduced in the quality of the enterprise.

"The Tremendous Magical Images"

"One crude but unquestionable indication" of the greatness of Griffith, Mr. Agee declares, was his power to create "permanent images." Mr. Agee selects as the most beautiful single shot in any movie the battle charge in *The Birth of a Nation*—a scene that is "a perfect realization of a collective dream of what the Civil War was like." Mr. Agee regards it as the perfection of "the tragic glory that is possible, or used to be possible, in war; or in war as the best in the spirit imagines or remembers it." This faculty of capturing a subjective and inarticulate mood suggests—

> the clearest and deepest aspect of Griffith's genius: he was a great primitive poet, a man capable, as only great and primitive artists can be, of intuitively perceiving and perfecting the tremendous magical images that underlie the memory and imagination of entire peoples. . . .
>
> This ["The Birth of a Nation"] was the one time in movie history that a man of great ability worked freely, in an unspoiled medium, for an unspoiled audience, on a majestic theme which involved all that he was; and brought to it, besides his abilities as an inventor and artist, absolute passion, pity, courage and honesty.

It is unfortunate that, Mr. Agee reports, *The Birth of a Nation* is today boycotted or shown piecemeal because "too many more or less well-meaning people still accuse Griffith of having made it an anti-Negro movie." Without agreeing with Griffith's representation of the Negro, Mr. Agee considers this criticism to be nonsense, for "Griffith's absolute desire to be fair, and understandable, is written

all over the picture, and so are degrees of understanding, honesty, and compassion far beyond the capacity of his accusers."

"Down from Griffith"

Mr. Agee's rehearsal of Griffith's limitations is equally significant in view of the subsequent history of motion pictures and the quality of today's films.

> My veneration for Griffith's achievements [Mr. Agee writes] is all the deeper when I realize what handicaps he worked against, how limited a man he was. He had no remarkable power of intellect, or delicateness of soul; no subtlety; little restraint; little if any "taste," whether to help his work or harm it; Lord knows (and be thanked) no cleverness; no fundamental capacity, once he had achieved his first astonishing development, for change or growth. He wasn't particularly observant of people; nor do his movies suggest that he understood them at all deeply. He had noble powers of imagination, but little of the *intricacy* of imagination that most good poets also have. His sense of comedy was pathetically crude and numb. He had an exorbitant appetite for violence, for cruelty, and for the Siamese twin of cruelty, a kind of obsessive tenderness which at its worst was all but nauseating. . . . I doubt that Griffith ever clearly . . . understood what was original in his work, and capable of almost unimaginably great development; and what was over-derivative, essentially non-cinematic, and dying. In any case, he did not manage to outgrow, or sufficiently to transform, enough in his style that was bad, or merely obsolescent.

Mr. Agee points out that Hollywood, and, to a great extent, movies in general, "grew down from him rather than up past him; audiences, and the whole eye and feeling of the world, have suffered the same degeneration."

"The Whole Middle Range"

Mr. Agee states that Griffith was remarkably good, as a rule, in "the whole middle range of feeling, but he was at his best just short of his excesses, and he tended in general to work out toward the dangerous edge." The gamut of a psychic "genius" is further defined in another passage:

> By my rememberance, his images were nearly always a little larger and wilder than life. The frame was always full, spontaneous, and lively. He knew wonderfully well how to contrast

> and combine different intensities throughout an immense range of emotion, movement, shadow, and light. Much of the liveliness was not intrinsic to the characters on the screen or their predicament, but *was his own vitality and emotion;* and much of it—notably in the amazing flickering and vivacity of his women—came of his almost maniacal realization of the importance of expressive movement. [Italics ours.]

The general use of moving pictures to portray the psychic nature *not united to manas* is sufficiently described in Mr. Agee's discussion, and is well accounted for in the nature of D. W. Griffith. The re-discovery of other uses for camera plays will depend upon other pioneers in the film industry, and such pioneers in turn will be recalled to a finer art when many minds and hearts hold the ideal image once represented by the "Mystery Plays," in which every mode of human expression participated.

THE AGE OF MAN

There still exists a gulf between the age of Man according to modern science and that assigned to him by the archaic doctrine. As yet, no sanction is given by scientists to Tertiary Man (pre-Quaternary, a geological period which has now lasted over a million years). H. P. Blavatsky records that Mr. Edward Clodd, reviewing M. de Mortillet's *Matériaux pour l'Histoire de l'Homme,* which put Man in the mid-Miocene period, remarked that "it would be in defiance of all that the doctrine of evolution teaches . . . to seek for so highly specialized a mammalian as man at an early stage in the life-history of the globe." Such views, however, have not been popular in twentieth-century science. We find Dr. W. E. Swinton, in a recent book, *The Corridor of Life* (London, 1948), confirming present-day theory by writing of the human race as possessing a "brief history of less than a million years." For the rest, he is dazzled by the supposed "rule of the reptiles," rated at more than a hundred and sixty times as long, with its grotesque *Pachycephalosaurus.* Dr. Swinton takes us on a romantic walk through his *Corridor.* We are led through the pre-Cambrian period of a thousand million years, the Cambrian age of 560 to 480 million years ago, the development of the first vertebrates about 450 million years ago, down to the ushering in of reptilian dominance and the transition to land-breeding which is placed speculatively at

about the time when our present coal beds were being formed out of fern swamp and forest.

Man and Mammal

Long ago, H. P. Blavatsky pointed out that to give the term "mammalian age" only to the Tertiary period was misleading and erroneous, "as it allows one to infer that there were no mammals but reptiles, birds, amphibians, and fishes alone in the Mesozoic times—the Secondary." Why (she asked) should not the presence of the marsupial—the discovery of whose fossil remains in Europe was admitted by geologists—presuppose the contemporary existence of other mammals, now unknown? And, if science denies the presence of man in the Secondary age of the *Ichthyosauri* and *Plesiosauri,* "it has to explain how men came to know of these monsters and describe them *before* the age of Cuvier. The old annals of China, India, Egypt, and even of Judea, are full of them" (*S.D.* II, 713). Dr. Swinton almost complains that from the thousand million years between the stage when life is supposed to have become possible and the beginning of the first approximation to a continuous record, "only a jellyfish, a few marine worm casts, and some sponge specules and seaweeds" remain as evidence. What he and his fellow-scientists do not recognize is that zoological relics found in the Laurentian, Cambrian, and Silurian systems, were first *astral* like the rest, and then "consolidated and materialized *pari passu* with the new vegetation," as the esoteric teaching holds.

How Life Became Possible

"Some activating agent" is the description given by Dr. Swinton to what he and other scientists assume to have been present when a warm ocean, a heavy and moisture-laden atmosphere, and "highly chemical shores" were all suited to chemical experiment. He does not guess at its nature. Yet its intervention must be supposed if the subsequent development of mammalian and human alike along orthodox lines is to make sense. How life became possible at all still puzzles the scientist who accepts the conventional division between organic and inorganic. A writer in *John O'London's Weekly* (April 16) reminds us, however, that Professor J. D. Bernal F.R.S., in the 1947 Guthrie Memorial Lecture before the London Society,

suggested that the activating agent might well have been fine particles of various special clays which the chemical industry is now learning to use for the same purpose, one quite recent application being in the petroleum industry for the "cracking" of oil. This may have all the merits of a hypothesis; but is it too much to expect that science should view the origin of life on this planet as but part of the larger question of a suitable cosmogonical theory? If not, how is such a theory to be formulated? We may well consider that it can be on no other basis than this:

> To become complete and comprehensible, a cosmogonical theory has to start with a primordial Substance diffused throughout boundless Space, *of an intellectual and divine nature.* (*S.D.* I, 594.)

And, using analogy as the guiding law in the solution of primal and final mysteries, we have to remember that "Nature, as a creative potency, is infinite, and no generation of physical scientists can ever boast of having exhausted the list of her ways and methods, however uniform the laws upon which she proceeds."

"The Flood" and the Atomic Era

Doré's painting, "The Flood," is reproduced in *Time* to illustrate the latest report on the instability of our earth. We are thus reminded that Noah's odyssey remains for many people the symbol of the ending, or almost-ending, of the world—an idea (or a fear) that in one form or another seems never to have left the mind of the race. The influences of an atomic age are calculated to revive the ancient pessimism in an all too realistic manner, and it is entirely appropriate that atomic means should also be proposed for eliminating a new "end-of-the-world" danger which has been conceived.

The theory in question in the *Time* item is that of Hugh Auchincloss Brown of Douglaston, N.Y., an electrical engineer, who recently asserted that the earth is about to capsize because ice accumulating in the Antarctic is rendering the globe bottom-heavy (*Time,* Sept. 13). Mr. Brown accepts the scientific opinion that the earth capsizes periodically, for this explains why woolly mammoths were found ("quick-frozen") in Siberia: in former times Siberia was a warm country, and the mammoths had fed on greenery. Noah's flood, Mr. Brown thinks, was caused by the most recent shifting of the earth's poles, and now our planet is again wobbling, preparatory to another shift. He recommends atomic blasting to thwart

a possible disaster in which, as *Time* flippantly puts it, "Most of mankind will be drowned and the rest will enjoy new climates." For $10 million, Antarctic expeditions can be furnished to measure accurately the accumulation of ice, and then the "dangerous excess" can be removed. The *Time* story concludes:

> Geologists were not alarmed nor even interested in the Brown theory. The Antarctic icecap is shrinking, they insisted, not growing. Even if it were growing, it could not upset the earth; geologists are confident that it never has.

"Alone the Ungodly"

Geologists may not be interested in Mr. Brown's theory, but the layman may be both interested in, and somewhat disconcerted by, this new reminder of an age-old worry—unless, of course, he believes in immortality and in the survival of the morally fit under any circumstances. Those who do not yet belong in the category of philosophical indifference might welcome the theosophical hypothesis, which combines moral and physical factors in a reasonable fashion. *The Secret Doctrine* teaches that the poles shift at regular cyclic intervals, causing "the displacement of the Oceans, the submersion of the polar lands, and the consequent *upheaval* of new continents in the equatorial regions, and *vice versa*" (II, 360.) The *fourth* shifting "arranged" the present (fifth) continental pattern, and an ancient record (quoted in the *Secret Doctrine,* II, 350) gives the karma of the cataclysm for that humanity:

> *Alone the handful of those Elect, whose divine instructors had gone to inhabit that Sacred Island—"from whence the last Saviour will come"—now kept mankind from becoming one-half the exterminator of the other* [as mankind does now—H.P.B.]. *It* (mankind) *became divided. Two-thirds of it were ruled by Dynasties of lower, material Spirits of the earth, who took possession of the easily accessible bodies; one-third remained faithful, and joined with the nascent Fifth Race—the divine Incarnates. When the Poles moved* (for the fourth time) *this did not affect those who were protected, and who had separated from the Fourth Race. Like the Lemurians—alone the ungodly Atlanteans perished, and "were seen no more."* . . . .

No exact figures for the cycle of pole-shifting are given, but H. P. Blavatsky suggests a connection between this physical event and the duration of a "Family Race" and the Sidereal year (*S.D.*

II, 433-5.) Other relevant passages to be found in the *Secret Doctrine:* tropical Greenland, and the evasions of "science" in the face of clear evidence for former continents (II, 725-8); the Lemurian river existing in England to this day (II, 333); and the allegories represented by the legend of Noah's flood (II, 353).

EXTERMINATION—BY NATURE OR MAN?

The twentieth-century idea of "atomic blasting" to correct irregularities of the earth is worthy of note as an inevtiable outgrowth of the superstition that nature can "do things" to man, and correlatively, that man can sufficiently "alter" nature by physical means. A conception of karma, of the intimate relationship between man and nature as *cause* and *effect,* would suggest other alternatives to "dynamiting" as a way of eliminating possibly dangerous excesses in the natural world. Philosophical consideration of the phenomenon of pole-shifting, as presented in the *Secret Doctrine,* might evolve the notion that the best thing mankind could do to protect itself against extermination by a natural cataclysm would be to cease causing unnatural cataclysms accompanied by mass extermination among its own members.

"ONLY A MORAL CONNECTION"

"Nature" or the intelligent beings, powers and forces which *are* the processes of Nature—provides at cyclic intervals new fields for the evolution of soul, new atmospheres and virgin lands for the habitations of men, but the violence of her operations must, under karma, be contributed by the only being capable of *creating* violence—man. The theory of former continents, Zodiacal revolutions, and the cyclic cataclysms visiting the races of men are touched upon only in general terms in the teachings of Theosophy, but actually even the *physics* of Theosophy has a moral import to be realized by the student. A short passage in relation to deluges as a *universal tradition* leaves the matter for the reader to pursue:

> The little deluge, the traces of which Baron Bunsen found in Central Asia, and which he places at about 10,000 years B.C., had nothing to do with either the *semi*-universal Deluge, or Noah's flood—the latter being a purely mythical rendering of old traditions—nor even with the submersion of the last Atlantean island; at least, only a moral connection. (*S.D.* II, 141.)

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